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Promoting Play: Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse

Allison Eimer

Luke King

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Stephen Schwartz

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Michael Winter

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Promoting Play: Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse

Allison Eimer, Luke King, Stephen Schwartz, Michael Winter

Bridging the Gaps, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, University of the Sciences

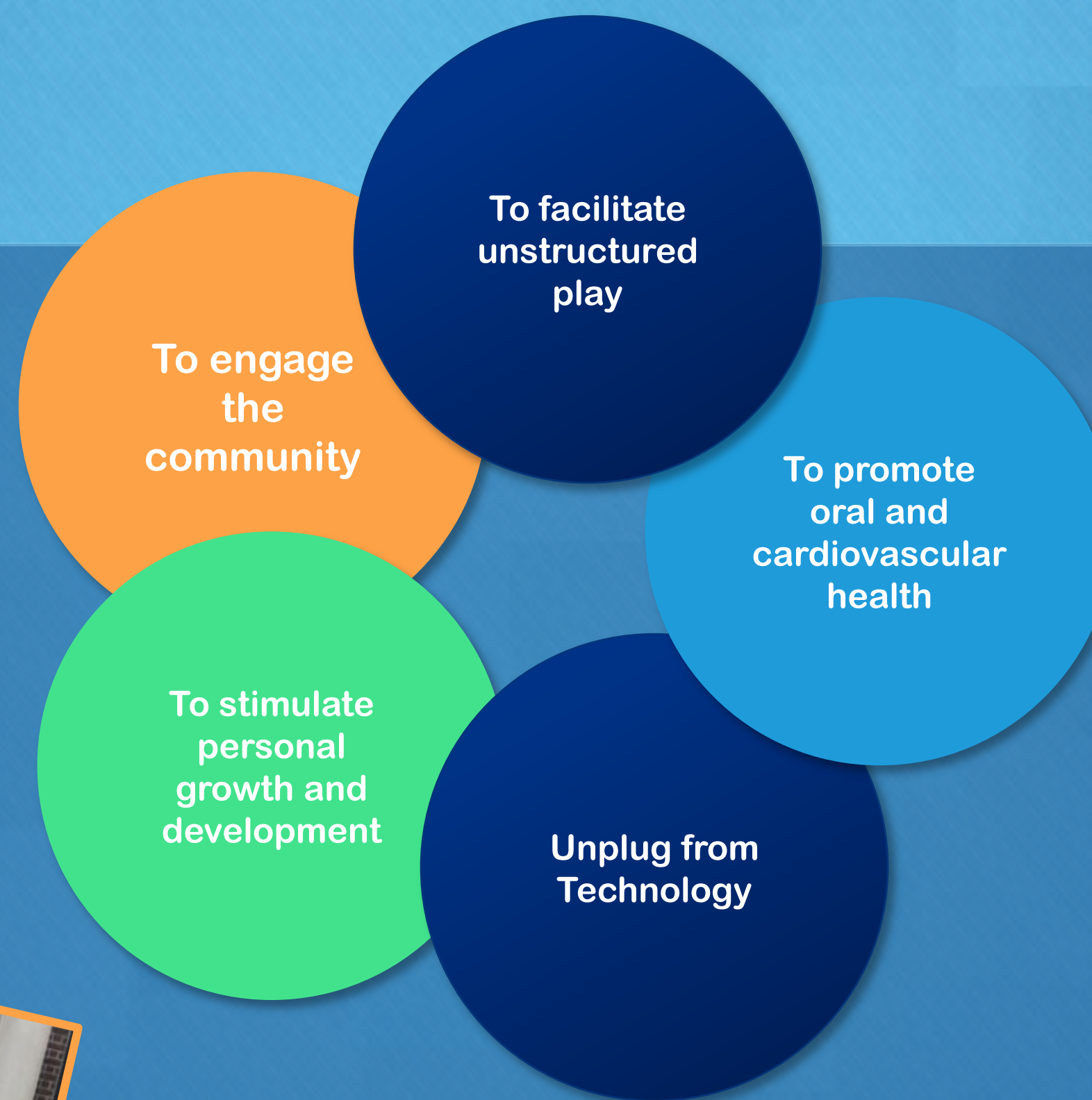


THE COMMUNITY SITE

Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse, located in East Fairmount Park, was founded in 1899 by Richard and Sarah Smith, a couple determined to design a safe play space for children. The Playground was dedicated to the memory of their adult son, Stanfield. Smith strives to provide opportunities for unstructured creative play for children 10 and younger. The playground contributes to the development of healthy children, strong families, and safe communities by sustaining free family admission and partnering with community based organizations to advocate the importance of play.



SITE GOALS & OBJECTIVES



SITE OUTCOMES

Community Partners:

- JFCS & Congresso ELECT: Teenage Pregnancy Program
- Strawberry Mansion NAC: Free Food Program
- Salvation Army Residence Program: Family Services

Demographics

- Predominantly African American populations
- Lower socioeconomic backgrounds
- Over 30 neonates and toddlers
- Over 100 adolescents
- Over 20 teenagers

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

Something poignant I have taken from the experience how socio-economic status does not equate to happiness. The children we interacted with were blissful and just loved to run around have fun, despite their life struggles.
-Stephen

I have lived in the Philadelphia area for my entire life but never interacted with the diverse populations that Smith serves. Bridging the Gaps provided me the opportunity to understand the obstacles that these populations struggle with each and every day. As a future physician it is vital to have a deep understanding of the population that I will serve. Bridging the Gaps allowed me to do this.
-Mike

I have become increasingly more sensitive to the underprivileged populations we have come to know over this past summer. I hope that I have enhanced the lives of my clients as much as they have impacted my own life. My involvement with play and children has helped prepare me to work with youth as a future healthcare professional.
-Allison

Although the mission of the program was to provide a service to a population in need, I believe I received in return more than what I provided my clients. I learned about the importance of working in solidarity with my fellow man and woman to identify and mutually combat a community issue. I am confident that this experience will help to prepare me to continue to serve a medically underserved population as a future physician.
-Luke

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We'd like to thank the Bridging the Gaps coordinators for facilitating our involvement in the program. We wouldn't have the extraordinary experience without the support of the staff at the Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse.